

**R E M A R K S**

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

**THE CLAIMS**

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite the features of the present invention whereby the image-processing apparatus includes an access restriction acquiring section to acquire an access restriction between said first information processing apparatus and said second information processing apparatus from any one of: (i) one of the plurality of information processing apparatuses, (ii) the image-printing apparatus, and (iii) a storage section provided in the image-processing apparatus itself, and whereby the routing section conducts a routing operation between the first information processing apparatus and the second information processing apparatus, based on the access restriction acquired by the access restriction acquiring section.

Similarly, independent claim 7 has been amended to recite the same features of the access restriction acquiring section with respect to the image-printing apparatus.

In addition, independent claim 13 has been amended to recite the features of the present invention whereby one of the image-processing apparatus and the image-printing apparatus includes: a restriction information acquiring section to acquire restriction

information, indicating functions, which are providable from one of the image-processing apparatus and the image-printing apparatus to the information processing apparatus, from a storage section provided in one of the image-processing apparatus, the image-printing apparatus and the information processing apparatus; and a providable function setting section to establish providable functions for the information processing apparatus, based on the restriction information acquired by the restriction information acquiring section.

Still further, claims 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 12-14 and 16 have been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as to put the claims in better U.S. form, and claims 17-20 have been canceled, without prejudice.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

#### THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-20 were all rejected under either 35 USC 102 or 35 USC 103 as either being anticipated by USP 5,933,584 ("Maniwa") or as being obvious in view of Maniwa, taken singly or in combination with one or both of USP 6,728,001 ("Lee") and USP 5,790,279 ("Sakellaropoulos"). These rejections, however,

are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 7, a network system for processing image data is provided which comprises an image-processing apparatus including an image-reading section to read an image from a document, an image-printing apparatus including an image-printing section to print an image on a sheet, a plurality of networks including a first network and a second network, and a plurality of information processing apparatuses including a first information processing apparatus coupled to the first network and a second information processing apparatus coupled to the second network.

As recited in amended independent claim 1, the image-processing apparatus includes an access restriction acquiring section to acquire an access restriction between said first information processing apparatus and said second information processing apparatus from any one of: (i) one of the plurality of information processing apparatuses, (ii) the image-printing apparatus, and (iii) a storage section provided in the image-processing apparatus itself, and whereby the routing section conducts a routing operation between the first information processing apparatus and the second information processing apparatus, based on the access restriction acquired by the access restriction acquiring section.

And as recited in amended independent claim 7, the image-printing apparatus includes an access restriction acquiring section to acquire an access restriction between said first information processing apparatus and said second information processing apparatus from any one of: (i) one of the plurality of information processing apparatuses, (ii) the image-processing apparatus, and (iii) a storage section provided in the image-printing apparatus itself, and whereby the routing section conducts a routing operation between the first information processing apparatus and the second information processing apparatus, based on the access restriction acquired by the access restriction acquiring section.

With this structure, since the image-processing apparatus (claim 1) or the image-printing apparatus (claim 7) is provided with the access restriction acquiring section for acquiring information in regard to the access restriction between the first information processing apparatus and the second information processing apparatus from, for example, any one of the plurality of information processing apparatuses, and since the routing section conducts the routing operation between the first information processing apparatus and the second information processing apparatus based on the access restriction acquired by the access restriction acquiring section, it becomes possible to improve the security of the communicating operations to be

conducted between the networks residing in the image-processing system, while effectively activating the network environment in which a plurality of networks are coupled to each other. See the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 30, line 3 to page 32, line 3.

It is respectfully submitted that the above described claimed structural features and advantageous effects of the present invention as recited in amended claims 1 and 7 are simply not at all disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited prior art references.

In particular, it is respectfully pointed out that the router disclosed in Maniwa at column 10, lines 25-32 (cited by the Examiner as corresponding to the routing section of the present invention) is merely a conventional router, and does not conduct a routing operation between a first information processing apparatus and a second information processing apparatus based on an access restriction acquired by an access restriction acquiring section, as according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claims 1 and 7.

In addition, it is respectfully submitted that the disclosure in Maniwa at column 22, line 50 to column 23, line 15 cited by the Examiner has nothing to do with the network system of the claimed present invention, but merely is an explanation in regard to the system expanding possibilities.

Still further, it is respectfully submitted that the disclosure in Lee at column 1, lines 30-49 cited by the Examiner also has nothing to do with the network system of the claimed present invention, but merely a general description of a network system including the printer server.

Indeed, it is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references discloses, teaches or suggests the features of the access restriction acquiring section and routing section of the present invention as recited in the amended claims 1 and 7.

And similarly, it is respectfully submitted that none of the cited references discloses, teaches or suggests the features of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 13 whereby one of the image-processing apparatus and the image-printing apparatus includes: a restriction information acquiring section to acquire restriction information, indicating functions, which are providable from one of the image-processing apparatus and the image-printing apparatus to the information processing apparatus, from a storage section provided in one of the image-processing apparatus, the image-printing apparatus and the information processing apparatus; and a providable function setting section to establish providable functions for the information processing apparatus, based on the restriction information acquired by the restriction information acquiring section.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in each of amended independent claims 1, 7 and 13, and each of claims 2-6, 8-12 and 14-16 respectively depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over the cited references, taken singly or in any combination, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

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